

Date Posted Posted By

10/20/1999 road_to_seattle@iatp.org

Subject: WTO News: The Road to Seattle Issue VIII

 WTO News: The Road to Seattle - Issue VIII October 21, 1999

Table of Contents

- Calendars Available on the Web for Seattle Activities
- Possible Seminar Space Available Through WTO
- Invitation for WTO On-line Forum
- Homestays Available During the Seattle Ministerial
- Information on Observing WTO Activities in Seattle
- REVISED List of Biotechnology-Related Events in Seattle
- Global Environment & Trade Study: Public Briefing Series on Trade & Environ
- Event: November 28: The WTO and the Global War System
- Events: December 1 & December 2: Linkages & Dumping
- Events: Gender & Trade in Seattle
- International Activists Tour U.S. to Counter The World Trade Organization!
- WTO Seattle Host Organization Releases Calendar of Business-Related Events
- Council Of European Chambers Of Commerce European Tradeweek At The WTO Sche
- Citizen Action Guide to the Environment & The WTO
- LIVE FROM SEATTLE: WORLD TRADE WATCH RADIO
- Foreign Policy in Focus Briefing Paper on the WTO
- NGOs on Government Delegations
- New Books on the WTO
- Recent Press: For Seattle, Triumph and Protest

CALENDARS AVAILABLE ON THE WEB FOR SEATTLE ACTIVITIES

<http://www.seattlewto.org/calendar.html> (This is a calendar which gives time, day and contact information in a true "calendar" format)

<http://www.ictsd.org/html/seattlecalendar.htm> (This is more of a schedule listing, with some more detailed information given)

POSSIBLE SEMINAR SPACE AVAILABLE THROUGH WTO

WTO has taken 10 rooms at the Madison Hotel in which it will schedule seminars held by NGO's, upon request. Since many groups want to hold seminars, it is important to get requests in promptly. Requests should be made to Bernard Kuiten, <mailto:bernard.kuiten@wto.org> or by telephone to Geneva: 011-739-52-54.

INVITATION FOR WTO ON-LINE FORUM

The World Trade Organization in conjunction with the World Bank is organizing an on-line forum on the subject of "Developing Countries and the Millenium Round". This forum will be held from 11 to 29 October and will be accessible through the joint WTO/World Bank Trade and Development website (<http://www.itd.org>).

Expert panelists from the WTO and the World Bank will participate in the forum.

Registered participants will be able to download a number of background papers and the forum will be held in English as the majority of panelists will be English speaking.

You can view the program and consult background papers at http://www.itd.org/wb/dc_milrou.htm

If you wish to participate in the on-line discussion (comments, questions etc), please contact <mailto:webmaster@wto.org> for information on how to register.

HOMESTAYS AVAILABLE DURING THE SEATTLE MINISTERIAL

This from Beth Farmer (<mailto:BethatEJ@aol.com>) Earthjustice, WTO Project

There are several organizations that are collaborating homestay opportunities for visitors during the Seattle Ministerial. All homestays are free of charge.

Hotel rooms are practically full and homestay opportunities are limited to first come/first serve, so if you have not yet made lodging arrangements for your stay in Seattle, please consider making your plans now. AND forward this message on to other individuals or groups that you know are coming.

For domestic visitors and/or activists, please contact Mike Godfree at People for Fair Trade. Mike can be reached at 206-770-9044 <mailto:mgodfree@u.washington.edu>. People for Fair Trade will offer a variety of homestay and lodging options including traditional homestays, student housing, and camping information.

For international visitors, please contact Leslie Deichl at 206 682-6986, or <mailto:ldeichl@world-affairs.org>. The World Affairs Council is offering to arrange a limited number of homestays, sightseeing, and/or

a meal at a private home in the Seattle area.

If you still would like to find a hotel room, Alesha at Public Citizen may be able to help. Call her at 202-546-4996 or <mailto:alesha@citizen.org> to explore hotel options.

INFORMATION ON OBSERVING WTO ACTIVITIES IN SEATTLE

[This from Nadia Chelafa, <mailto:nchelafa@consint.org>]

There will be two locations for observing the open Ministerial proceedings. A number of observers can be seated at the meeting itself in the Convention Center, but not all of the 1000-plus who will be credentialled. Thus, the Madison Hotel Ballroom will be equipped for seating of the remainder of the credentialled observers to be seated and to watch proceedings on the large screen from 10 a.m. to the end of each session.

With respect to the opening day schedule, it is expected that the opening ceremonies and scheduled speeches will take place in the a.m. and the opening statements of each Minister who is not on the a.m. program will commence around 3 p.m.

The Madison Ballroom also will be the site of daily NGO briefings from 8-9:30 a.m. and daily NGO debriefings on the day's activities at 6:30 p.m. In addition, the Madison Hotel will have facilities NGO's may use for computer hook-ups, faxes and telephones.

Please note this information is for those NGOs who will be accredited in Seattle.

REVISED LIST OF BIOTECHNOLOGY-RELATED EVENTS IN SEATTLE

Biotechnology & The WTO: Events for Seattle, USA, November/December 1999

Biotechnology is sure to be a big issue this fall in Seattle when trade ministers from around the world meet. Trade wars loom over genetically modified organisms (GMOs); farmers are questioning the benefits of planting GMO seeds, as food companies are eyeing the premium in non-GMO products; and seed companies are demanding segregation of GMO/non-GMO products; consumers are questioning the safety of GMO products, as well as the increasing corporate control of the food system.

Many events have already been planned in conjunction with the Third Ministerial Meeting, and many will include discussions of biotechnology, biodiversity, intellectual property rights, patenting of life, the SPS Agreement and other related issues.

On Friday & Saturday, November 26 & 27, the International Forum on Globalization is sponsoring a two-day Teach-In on Economic Globalization and the Role of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Teach-In will take place at Seattle's Benaroya Symphony Hall. The Teach-In will include panels, debates and discussions on agriculture, food safety, the environment, human rights, biotechnology, national sovereignty, labor rights, culture, public health, and the increasingly dominant role of global corporations. For more information, contact the IFG at (1) 415-771-3394, <http://www.ifg.org>, <mailto:ifg@ifg.org>

On the afternoon of Sunday, November 28, there will be a gathering of biotech activists from around the world who are planning on being in Seattle. This will be a time for activists who have been working on various issues related to biotechnology to meet and exchange information about their work. For more information, contact Gabriela Flora at the Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy at (1) 612-870-3417, <mailto:gflora@iatp.org>

On Monday, November 29, NGOs working on environment and health issues have organized a day of press briefings, speakers, strategy sessions and actions. These events will take place at Seattle's United Methodist Church. For more information, contact Mark Vallianatos (<mailto:MVallianatos@foe.org>) or Dan Seligman (<mailto:dan.seligman@sierraclub.org>).

On Wednesday, December 1, the Council for Responsible Genetics and the Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy are convening a session on "No Patents on Life: Biotech in the Global Economy." This event will take place at Seattle's Plymouth Congregational Church. For more information, contact Phil Bereano at (1) 206-543-9037, <mailto:phil@uwtc.washington.edu>

On Wednesday, December 1, the Consumers' Choice Council will sponsor a media briefing entitled "GMOs and the WTO: Food for Thought," which will bring together experts from around the world to examine potential problems with GMOs in relation to the environment, food security, and ethics. The event will be held at the Bell Harbor Convention Center from 2:00pm - 5:00pm. Confirmed participants include: David Bryer, Executive Director, Oxfam U.K. and Ireland; Dr. Vandana Shiva, Director, Research Foundation for Science, Technology & Ecology; and Dr. Mae Won Ho, Reader in Biology, Open University, United Kingdom. For more information, contact Chad Dobson at (1) 202-785-1950, <mailto:cdobson1@attglobal.net>

On Wednesday, December 1, the Global Environment & Trade Study will host a public briefing on resolving the tensions between trade and the environment, including a discussion of GMOs. This breakfast will take place from 8:00-9:30am in the East Room of the Renaissance Hotel. For more information, contact Susan Weuste at <mailto:susan.weuste@yale.edu>

On Wednesday, December 1, the European Union Trade Forum will be hosting a session on "Genetically Modified Products, National Sanctions, British Beef, & American Hormones" in Room 120, Kane Hall, of the University of Washington at 6:15pm. There will also be a short reception on the second floor of Kane Hall (tickets \$5 for the reception only) beginning at 5:30. For more information, contact David Hughes, President of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce at (1) 425-481-3669, or <mailto:hacofc@aol.com>

Also on Wednesday, December 1, the Consumer Project on Technology will

be sponsoring an NGO discussion on TRIPS from 10:00am-12:00pm, at the Madison Hotel.. For more information, contact James Love at <mailto:love@cptech.org>, <http://www.cptech.org>, (1) 202-387-8030.

On Thursday, December 2 the Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy and the International Forum on Food & Agriculture, in conjunction with ActionAid, Public Citizen and the regional host committee are sponsoring Food & Agriculture Day. An afternoon strategy-sharing workshop will be devoted to GMOs and agriculture, and the SPS Agreement. The morning sessions will take place beginning at 10:00am at the United Methodist Church, afternoon locations TBA. For more information, contact Renske van Staveren at (1) 612-870-3423, <mailto:rvanstaveren@iatp.org>

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT & TRADE STUDY: PUBLIC BRIEFING SERIES ON TRADE & ENVIRONMENT

29 November - 3 December 1999

8:00 am - 9:30 am

Renaissance Hotel ú East Room ú 515 Madison Avenue ú Seattle, WA

Monday, 29 November

Environment in the WTO Round - Setting the Agenda

Moderator: Daniel C. Esty (Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy)
Maritta von B. Koch-Weser (Director General, World Conservation Union/
IUCN)

Gary Sampson (World Trade Organization/United Nations University)
Phil Condit (CEO, Boeing)*

Tuesday, 30 November 1999

Achieving Win-Win Opportunities

Moderator: Steve Charnovitz (Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering)*
Lord Holme (International Chamber of Commerce)*
Beatrice Chaytor (Foundation for International Environmental Law and
Development)
Christopher Stone (University of Southern California Law Center)

Wednesday, 1 December 1999

GMO's, Turtles and Trees: Can We Avoid Trade Tensions?

Moderator: Mark Ritchie (Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy)
Lakshman Guruswamy (University of Tulsa Law School)
Ronnie Hall (Friends of the Earth, United Kingdom)
Business Leader

Thursday, 2 December 1999

WTO Transparency and Governance

Moderator: Ricardo Melendez (International Center for Trade and
Sustainable Development)*
Ambassador Tran van Thinh (former EU GATT Ambassador)
Peter Pedersen (World Trade Organization)*
Yolanda Kakabadse (Environment Minister of Ecuador)*

Friday, 3 December 1999
Next Steps from Seattle

Moderator: James Cameron (Foundation for International Environmental
Law and Development)
Victor Lichtinger (Especialistas Ambientales S.A. de C.V., Mexico City)
Simon Tay (National University of Singapore)*
Business Leader

* Invited, but attendance not yet confirmed

EVENT: NOVEMBER 28: THE WTO AND THE GLOBAL WAR SYSTEM

Sunday, November 28th 1999
Hildebrand Hall, Plymouth Congregational Church
1212 6th Avenue (at University), Seattle
2:30PM - 5:00PM

This public forum is being organized by peace groups from the U.S. and
Canada, and will examine how the World Trade Organization and economic
globalization prevents efforts to promote peace and human security. The
result is a global war system which drives the arms race and uses
military power to defend corporate interests around the world.

The forum will examine these areas:

1. WTO and economic globalization
2. Weapons corporations and economic conversion
3. Nuclear weapons and their abolition

SPEAKERS

Susan George, Transnational Institute
David Korten, Positive Futures Network
Alice Slater, Abolition 2000/Global Resource Action Center for the
Environment
Steven Staples, Intl Network on Disarmament and Globalization

MODERATOR

Martin Fleck, Physicians for Social Responsibility.

SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Local Organizing Committee:
Northwest Disarmament Committee (USA) and End the Arms Race (Canada).
International Affiliates:
Abolition 2000 Working Group on Corporate Issues
The International Network on Globalization and Disarmament

Admission is free. For information, contact (206) 547-0952 or
mailto:ss Staples@randomlink.com.

EVENTS: DECEMBER 1 & DECEMBER 2: LINKAGES & DUMPING

The CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment and Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy are pleased to announce the following meeting which they will be organising at the NGO Centre at Seattle on 1st December 1999

"THE VEXED ISSUE OF LINKAGES"

A Panel Discussion on the issue of linkages of trade with labour standards or with environmental standards etc. Eminent speakers of opposing views will debate the matter, which has become quite controversial. Some of the industrialised countries, and members of the civil society, are pushing for one or the other issue to be incorporated into the WTO, while many in the civil society and the developing countries as a bloc are against the incorporation of any such standards into the multilateral trade regime. Their fear is that such standards can be used as protectionist measure. On the other hand there are many who feel that unless such standards are adopted liberalised trade would not translate into fair trade. Another section feels that amending trade rules to include such non-trade issues would enhance the powers of the WTO, which is anyway quite powerful and opaque.

Time: 1000hrs-1300hrs on Wednesday 1st December

The CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment are pleased to announce the following meeting which it will be organising at the NGO Centre at Seattle on 2nd December 1999

"ANTI-DUMPING AND THE WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM"

A Workshop on the issue of anti-dumping and the dispute settlement system at the WTO. Increasingly, anti-dumping tool is being "misused" by countries, which defeats the very purpose of trade liberalisation, and affects the market access of countries adversely. Proposals to bring in some tighter discipline on anti-dumping are being resisted. Secondly, the WTO dispute settlement system has been a source of criticism for its flaws: interpretation, lack of transparency, and the sheer cost of the same. On studying dispute settlement vis-...-vis anti-dumping one finds that anti-dumping issues are excluded from the normal dispute settlement process. The Agreement on Anti-dumping allows consumer organisations to submit their views on anti-dumping proceedings at home, however the right of the civil society to be a part of the dispute settlement system at the WTO is being resisted by several developing countries. The resistance has some substance but solutions need to be found rather than further the undemocratic nature of the system.

Time: 1000hrs-1300hrs on Thursday 2nd December

VENUE: For both events:

Marion Room,
Renaissance Madison Hotel,
515 Madison Street, Seattle,
Washington 98104
Ph: 1-206-5830300

Fx: 1-206-6228635

Contact: Mr. Raghav Narsalay/ Mr. K.S. Sajeev

Until 28th November

mailto:cutsjpr@jpl.dot.net.in

Ph: 91.141.20 2940/20 5802

Fx: 91.141.20 2968/20 3998

From 29th November to 2nd December

Doubletree Seatac Hotel

Seattle, Washington

EVENTS: GENDER & TRADE IN SEATTLE

The DAWN/Caribbean and Center of Concern project on Gender and Trade is planning a panel for Tuesday, November 30 on "Southern Perspectives on Gender and Trade." The panel will be late in the afternoon to avoid conflict with the Labor Demonstration planned for that day. It will take place at the Madison. For more information, contact Maria Riley, Center of Concern, mailto:mriley@coc.org

Diverse Women for Diversity with the co-sponsorship of WEDO and Center of Concern is planning a Women's evening of celebration at Pike's Place on December 1, following the NGO Forum Day on Women. Everyone is invited. Contact Shalini Bhutani mailto:divwomen@del6.vsnl.net.in for more information.

A women's caucus has been scheduled for 9:30 every morning at the Madison Hotel. The Madison is the NGO center for accredited NGOs. For more information, contact Maria Riley, Center of Concern, mailto:mriley@coc.org.

Wednesday, December 1, has been tabbed "Women, Democracy & Development" Day by the NGOs. Events will take place at the United Methodist Church, downtown Seattle. For more information, contact Maria Riley, Center of Concern, mailto:mriley@coc.org.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVISTS TOUR U.S. TO COUNTER THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION!

"The Road to Seattle: An Educational Road Show on Corporate Globalization"

Dozens of women and men from Bangladesh, Bolivia, Canada, Germany, India, Israel, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, West Papua and the United States will gather at New York University, Thursday, October 28, 1999, to kick off an international activist tour of North America. The focus of the caravan, and its ultimate destination, is the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle, November 29 through December 3. The Gallatin School of Individualized Study at

NYU and the activist group Reclaim the Streets are sponsoring the event.

WHO: The People's Global Action Caravan

WHAT: North American tour kick-off rally in New York City; Destination: Seattle

WHEN: 7pm, Thursday, October 28, 1999

WHERE: New York University, Main Building, Room 713, 100 Washington Square East

The caravan consists of international activists and farmers crossing the United States over the next 6 weeks and stopping in some 20 communities to raise awareness about the downsides of "corporate globalization." They are part of an estimated 50,000 protesters expected to turn out for the WTO meeting.

Representing every continent, the activists contend that the upcoming meeting of the WTO could sow the seeds for the further erosion of human rights, environmental protections and health and safety standards. The participants are people who are directly impacted by corporate globalization. This diverse group represents environmental, human rights, workers, fishing and farming movements across the globe.

For more information, or to schedule interviews with participants or organizers, please contact PCAN at (610)478-1888 or <mailto:pgacaravan@aol.com> or <mailto:pgacaravan@pcan.org>.

###

Christopher James
Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations
Gallatin School of Individualized Study
212/998/6876 Voice
212/995/4694 Fax

WTO SEATTLE HOST ORGANIZATION RELEASES CALENDAR OF BUSINESS-RELATED EVENTS

SEATTLE--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 7, 1999--The Seattle Host Organization (SHO) for the World Trade Organization ministerial November 29-December 3, 1999 today released a calendar of business-related events to be held this fall in preparation for the global trade meeting.

These events are open to the public and are sponsored by a range of local business and trade organizations, in collaboration with SHO. They cover a variety of topics such as the WTO, access to capital and global markets for small and medium-sized businesses, how to find a job in international

trade, how to build global business relationships, and an assessment of trade issues from various regional perspectives.

"The enthusiasm within the business and trade community to present programming about trade, careers in international business, resources for small business, and the WTO has really been impressive," said Liz Thomas, chair of the SHO Business Outreach Subcommittee. "SHO is indebted to the hundreds of individuals and organizations in the state who have made this calendar of events possible."

For more information on these and other events, visit the SHO website at <http://www.wtoseattle.org> or contact Jayme White with the Seattle Host Organization office at 206/770-3150, extension 5103.

COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE EUROPEAN TRADEWEEK AT THE WTO SCHEDULE

From: Hungarian-American Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest, 15300 Northeast 163rd Street, Woodinville, WA 98072-8962, Tel/Fax: 425-481-3669, <mailto:HACofC@aol.com>

October 11, 1999

Dear Colleagues:

Here is a preliminary attempt to put the Council of European Chambers of Commerce European Tradeweek at the W.T.O. schedule onto a single page.

Monday Nov 29 Luncheon hosted by the Dutch American Chamber of Commerce
Speaker and Topic to be Determined;

Tuesday Nov 30 Luncheon hosted by the French American CofC; Speaker: A Distinguished Member of the French Delegation; Topic: France and the W.T.O.

Wednesday Dec 1 Luncheon hosted by the Danish, Finnish and Norwegian CofCs; Speaker: Mr. Knut Vollebek, Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs; Topic: To be Announced.

Wednesday Dec 1 hosted by the Hungarian American CofC; Evening Panel Discussion Genetically Modified Products, National Sanctions, British Beef, American Hormones, etc; Panelists: A representative from the European Union; Professor Matt Sparke, University of Washington; Thomas Donohoe, President U S Chamber of Commerce (to be confirmed); and a representative from the USTR (pending decision???) at Kane Hall, 120 UofW; reception followed by panel emceed by Barry Mitzman of KCTS; WTO briefing by Ms. Istvan Major, Chief Hungarian Delegate to the WTO, Geneva

Thursday, Dec 2 Luncheon hosted by the German American CofC; Speaker: A high ranking Member of the German Delegation; Topic: Critical WTO Issues Related to Trade With Germany"

Friday, Dec 3 Luncheon hosted by the Swedish American CofC; Speaker: Mr. Leif Pagrotsky, Swedish Minister of Trade; Topic: Sweden - The New World Technology Tiger of the North

Note: All Luncheons are at the Skyline Level in the Space Needle; cost \$35, and require an advance reservation with the respective chamber; they begin at 1130 hrs and include a briefing on the day's WTO. The Panel discussion begins with a reception at 5:30 p.m (1730 hrs).

Tentative Schedule as of Monday October 11, 1999 - David Hughes, HACofC

CITIZEN ACTION GUIDE TO THE ENVIRONMENT & THE WTO

[This from Beth Farmer, Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, WTO project, <mailto:BethatEJ@aol.com>]

I wanted to alert everyone to a new guide released by Friends of the Earth, entitled "The World Trade Organization and the Environment: A Citizen Action Guide."

This 14-page guide includes information on forests and the WTO, finance and the WTO, what you can do, and more. To receive a copy of the publication, you can contact Friends of the Earth, Tel: 202-783-7400, <mailto:foe@foe.org>.

LIVE FROM SEATTLE: WORLD TRADE WATCH RADIO

Help get this alternative coverage on your local non-commercial station!

Syndicated columnist Norman Solomon and veteran radio journalist Julie Light will co-host World Trade Watch, a series of five daily programs from the historic WTO Summit in Seattle November 29-Dec. 3, 1999

Find out how you can get your local station to carry WORLD TRADE WATCH! Programs are FREE to non-commercial stations.

CONTACT US TODAY Telephone: 510-251-1077
<mailto:wtw@radioproject.org>

Co-Produced by CORPORATE WATCH: <http://www.corpwatch.org>, the NATIONAL RADIO PROJECT: <http://www.radioproject.org>, and the INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ACCURACY: <http://www.accuracy.org>

FOREIGN POLICY IN FOCUS BRIEFING PAPER ON THE WTO

Foreign Policy in Focus has a 4-page briefing paper available in print or on the web that is an excellent resource for anyone who wants to be informed on some of issues surrounding the trade debate. The following URL links directly to "WTO and Developing Countries". This essay provides a solid overview of WTO policies and effects on developing countries.

<http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org/briefs/vol3/v3n37wto.html>

Key points in the article:

--The agenda of the WTO, the implementation of its agreements, and the much-praised dispute settlement system all serve to advance the interests of developed countries, sidelining those of the developing countries.

--The least developed countries (LDCs) are marginalized in the world trade system, and their products continue to face tariff escalations.

--Rules uniformly applied to WTO members have brought about inequalities because each member has different economic circumstances.

For more information, contact: Tim McGivern, Foreign Policy in Focus, <mailto:ircalb@swcp.com>, <http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org>

NGOS ON GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS

This is a list of NGOs that will go as members of their government delegation. Is anyone from other regions expecting to go in their government's delegation? Please reply to <mailto:rvanstaveren@iatp.org>.

1. WWF representative in British official delegation.
2. Diakonia representative in Swedish official delegation.
3. Greenpeace NL, Netherland.
4. Kepa, Finland
5. MS - Danish Association for International Co-operation, Denmark.
6. ForUm, Norway.
7. Almost certainly NCOS will be included in the Belgian delegation.
8. Still to be confirmed but it is possible that representatives from Conferderation Paysanne and from NBS will form part of their national delegation.

NEW BOOKS ON THE WTO

The World Trade Organization: A Citizen's Guide, by Steven Shrybman (CCPA/Lorimer publishers)

As environmental lawyer and leading trade specialist Steven Shrybman says in the preface to his new book on the WTO, "remaining uninformed about issues that so directly bear on so many aspects of contemporary life is a luxury no democratic society can afford." His book is a must read for all who wish to participate in the much needed debate about international trade in general and the WTO in particular.

The World Trade Organization: A Citizen's Guide is available at major bookstores in Canada or from the CCPA. Steven Shrybman is Executive Director of the Vancouver-based West Coast Environmental Law Association. For more information including an excerpt from the book, visit the CCPA web site at: <http://www.policyalternatives.ca> or call: 613-563-1341.

[This from: Bruce Campbell, Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Suite 410, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa, ON K1P 5E7
Tel: 613-563-1341 Fax: 613-233-1458 <mailto:brucec@policyalternatives.ca>
<http://www.policyalternatives.ca>

Book on Human Rights and the WTO

INCHRITI (the International NGO Committee on Human Rights in Trade and Investment) is to launch the following book, published in co-operation with the Global Publications Foundation and ICDA, shortly before the Seattle Ministerial Conference:

"Human Rights and Economic Globalisation: Directions for the WTO",
Mehra, M. (Ed.), Global Publication Foundation, Sweden. November 1999.
ISBN 91-973739-0-7.

Description:

"Do human rights matter to international trade policy in a globalising economy? Or are they a distraction better left to specialist bodies and kept well out of international economic bodies such as the World Trade Organisation?"

Copies of the book, with a Foreword by Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, will be given to all Head of Delegations at the WTO as well Heads of National Commissions for Human Rights to connect the trade and human rights policy communities. INCHRITI is also planning other activities at Seattle and beyond - details will be sent out in due course.

For review copies or more information, please contact: Malini Mehra,
INCHRITI/ PDHRE
<mailto:malinimehra@aol.com>

Whose Trade Organization Corporate Globalization & the Erosion of Democracy by Lori Wallach and Michelle Sforza.

Whose Trade Organization is a ground-breaking book which documents the five year record of the powerful World Trade Organization (WTO). Based on a year of intensive research, this book reviews the specific cases and outcomes that have made the WTO increasingly controversial worldwide. Not one public health, safety or environmental policy that has been challenged before the WTO has been upheld; all have been found

to be "trade barriers," which must be eliminated. Most Americans are unaware that such decisions are being made behind closed doors at the WTO without the most basic due process guarantees.

For more information, contact: Margrete Strand Rangnes, Public Citizen Global Trade Watch, 215 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, Washington DC, 20003 USA
mailto:mstrand@citizen.org, 202-454-5106

RECENT PRESS: FOR SEATTLE, TRIUMPH AND PROTEST

October 13, 1999
New York Times

By SAM HOWE VERHOVEK

SEATTLE -- When Seattle beat 40 other U.S. cities early this year for the right to be the host of a meeting of the world's governing trade organization, local leaders were exultant. Here in what is often called the most trade-dependent region of the nation, they said the conference would be a chance to showcase Seattle as a world-class center of high-tech innovation and a friend to global trade.

All that may still happen when 5,000 delegates and dignitaries from 134 nations -- including President Clinton -- gather to start a new round of global trade negotiations here in November. Those negotiations will encompass some of the most politically sensitive issues facing the world's trading nations, including rules on agriculture and new technologies. But it is increasingly clear that the largest free-trade meeting ever held in this country has also become a giant protest magnet for a broad array of environmental, labor and other groups that say the trade body is a handmaid to corporate interests whose authority should be sharply curtailed.

Three hundred groups are vowing to bring 50,000 people or more to downtown Seattle to picket, demonstrate, hold teach-ins and cause general disruption during the Nov. 30-Dec. 3 meeting that could turn the city's streets into a carnival of protest and, perhaps, a morass of gridlock.

It is a sign of how crucial trade issues have become to average people that a meeting once might have excited only policy experts now has drawn the attention of a cross-section of America that includes farmers, fishermen and assembly-line workers.

The W.T.O. has already been entangled in spats over items that include Caribbean-grown bananas, hormone-fed beef from the United States, gas refined in Venezuela and Japanese imported liquor.

Even more contentious issues loom: over loss of price supports for American farmers and over rulings about what kinds of genetically modified foods countries can offer to consumers on supermarket shelves.

Underlying all the individual issues is a fundamental disagreement about the proper role of the trade organization. Proponents say it serves a crucial role in bolstering the world economy by tearing down trade barriers all over the globe. But opponents believe that the W.T.O. is using its power as an arbiter in trade disputes to systematically undermine laws passed by various countries to promote health, food safety, environmental protection and better working conditions.

It is from those diverse concerns that a vigorous protest movement has emerged. Just how extensive or disruptive any protests will be is difficult to gauge, partly because even the groups themselves, more than 300 at latest count, are not exactly of one mind. Some say they have no plans to be unduly raucous and simply want their perspective to be heard by the trade negotiators, while others are boasting that their goal is to bring the city to a standstill with guerrilla-like tactics like scaling skyscrapers to unfurl huge banners, lying in the street to stop traffic or chaining themselves to buildings and trees.

But the city is already budgeting \$6 million for a major security operation and Mayor Paul Schell, noting the potential for disruption, has taken to joking: "I'm hoping for rain, frankly." While Seattle is indeed likely to get some rain at that time of year, it may not dampen the fervency of the protesters.

"I'm in the camp that wants to shut the W.T.O. down," explained John Sellers, director of the Ruckus Society of Berkeley, Calif., which recently helped to lead what was called a "Globalize This!" training session for protesters at a farm near the Cascade Mountains, outside Seattle.

"I think this is the largest gathering of unaccountable corporate power that has ever occurred on this planet, and it should be stopped," said Sellers, who described his group as "open to work with anyone who is working for progressive social change on the left side of the spectrum."

In some ways, the protesters have already scored important victories and in

Seattle, a city with a long history of union activity and a decidedly favorable bent toward environmental causes, they are clearly generating some sympathy. The local King County Council, for instance, recently haggled over and nearly failed to approve wording for a routine resolution of welcome to the W.T.O. delegates.

"I was thrilled when Seattle was selected," said Michael Dolan, a field organizer for the protesters, who is deputy director of the Global Trade Watch program of Public Citizen, a group founded by Ralph Nader. "It's almost like they're giving us home-field advantage. There are great labor unions here, great labor energy, all these environmentalists."

The protesters have commanded the attention of local news organizations and, in what was clearly a bid to defuse some of the potential for conflict, the Clinton administration has taken the unusual step of pressing the W.T.O.'s leaders to hold a one-day meeting just before the conference gets under way to listen to the protester's concerns. The president also plans to send several members of his cabinet to Seattle in the weeks before the conference to talk up the benefits of free trade.

The new director-general of the Geneva-based trade body, former New Zealand Prime Minister Mike Moore, was in Seattle earlier this month and used a forum at the University of Washington to concede that the trade body had not done an adequate job of explaining its mission to the public.

"I thought the case had been made," Moore said. "But I guess we have to back up the truck and explain how we got here. We've never reached out."

Advocates for the five-year-old trade organization and the 1948 framework pact that preceded it, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, known as GATT, say it is helping to bolster the world economy and lift workers out of poverty by bringing down barriers to trade all over the globe.

But opponents believe the W.T.O. is using its power as an arbiter to systematically undermine laws passed by various countries to promote health, food safety, environmental protection and better working conditions.

In just one such case, several Asian nations won a preliminary ruling from the trade organization last year after they charged that the U.S. laws intended to protect sea turtles from shrimpers' nets unfairly blocked their exports to U.S. markets. The protesters also say a ruling in favor of Venezuelan gas exporters had the effect of weakening anti-pollution

laws in
the United States.

"The record of the W.T.O. speaks for itself," said Jeremy Madsen, an organizer with the Citizens Trade Campaign, a coalition of dozens of groups opposed to the W.T.O.. "It's not something that is beneficial for workers, it's not beneficial for the environment. It has an atrocious impact on everyone but the elite, the very wealthy."

Business groups, clearly alarmed at the attention the protesters have already generated here, plan to organize their own campaign to promote the benefits of free trade. However, as a spokesman for one such group said, they do not exactly plan to rappel down the Space Needle to explain their point of view and therefore may not draw as much attention.

"I think the story in terms of media coverage is that we do pretty well in print, but we lose big-time on the pictures," said Scott Miller, a lobbyist with Procter & Gamble who is chairman of the United States Alliance for Trade Expansion, a group backed by business and based in Washington, D.C. "That will continue to be the dynamic."

Some opponents of the trade organization say the organization has adopted secretive operating rules that are practically forcing critics into public protests. Even when Moore came to Seattle on his scouting trip, he was met with protesters who carried signs that said "Stop child labor now" and "No globalization without representation."

"There isn't all that much left, really, because the system is so closed," said Patti Goldman, managing lawyer of the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, an environmental group. "It isn't democratic. There's no participation process for the public to play a role. That is a fundamental problem."

Schell, among others, is clearly walking a bit of a political tightrope, but he says he simply wants to make sure that the city is a good host to both those attending the trade conference and those who come here to protest it.

"I've been on the other side of the picket lines, and so have a lot of people here," the mayor said in an interview. "They need to be heard. Seattle likes hosting these kinds of things. We see ourselves as an open city, a center for creative debate.

"Now," he added, "one of the things I'm going to try to convey to the protesters is that they are more likely to be effective if they find the right ways to be heard. People listen better when they're not being

shouted
at."

Madsen of the Citizens Trade Campaign said the protests would be respectful.

"The intention of everyone involved is to have a very peaceful event, or series of events, that really speak to the issues," he said. "The goal is not really to disrupt the city per se. Traffic probably is going to get clogged, it's going to be hard to get downtown. But a lot of that won't have anything to do with us, it will have to do with security perimeters set up by the police, the FBI. The potential for real catastrophe is being greatly exaggerated."

But with such a widespread call to protest, and with some groups already vowing disruption, the potential is certainly there, said Walt Crowley, a local author and director of a Web site of Seattle history, historylink.org.

"Clearly the labor movement, the environmental movement, and other interest groups have legitimate concerns and even grievances with the W.T.O.," said Crowley.

"They're trying to reform a process and the structures for guiding international trade, they're not trying to blow them up," he said. "But they kind of have a protest going on with festival seating, which means you really have no control over who's sitting next to you. And I think there's some anxiety that the theatrics of protest are going to eclipse the content."

To subscribe to WTO News: The Road to Seattle, send an email to listserv@iatp.org. In the body of the message write: `subscribe road_to_seattle`. To unsubscribe, send an email to listserv@iatp.org, with the message `unsubscribe road_to_seattle`.

The full text searchable archives to this and other news bulletins produced by IATP can be viewed on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.newsbulletin.org>.

Submissions to the Road to Seattle should be sent to Renske van Staveren at: rvanstaveren@iatp.org, or faxed to Renske at: (1) 612-870-4846.
